

To: wtc@nist.gov
From: <Dan.Noel@ieee.org> (by way of NIST Inquiries <inquiry@nist.gov>)
Subject: World Trade Center, 3rd destruction, questions...

Hello!

Thank you for your lengthy report on the destruction of the 3rd World Trade Center building. Since the steel was shipped shortly after the event, it must have taken an extraordinary effort for NIST to reconstruct the failure mechanism.

Still, your report appears to leave several important aspects of this major structural failure enigmatic. Could you kindly clarify them?

1. The failure of the building left a high quantity of liquid iron alloy under its rubble. I don't have numbers in mind, but we are talking of several cubic meters of liquid Fe for maybe a month. Your report seems to make no allusion to this phenomenon, not even to state that NIST could not come up with a model that would account for it. Did I miss something?
2. The structural failure would have initiated at floors 7 to 9. But assuming the lower portion of the frame was intact, it would have countered the fall of the upper part of the building. Yet the videos taken of the failure show the whole building falling into the ground as a piston inside a sleeve with no resistance. These videos strongly suggest that the movement of the building was initiated at ground level, with all support columns failing simultaneously. Does NIST have an explanation for this contradiction?
3. Since the whole frame turned into rubble and almost neatly filled the basements, it is actually likelier that the failure started close to the bottom of the frame, deep in the basement. This further affects the credibility of the floor 7-9 hypothesis.
4. The language of the report is often conditional, with critical statements built around "can", "only in this particular case", or "eventually". Sadly, the alternatives to these statements are not well explored. Will NIST go back to them?
5. NIST is certainly aware of previous research that found mysterious Fe spheres in the μm range in the World Trade Center dust. NIST's report on the twin towers did not mention them. Does the report address this finding? Did NIST come up with some plausible explanation for it?
6. The Bush administration has been often accused of waging a war against science. Should a detailed reading of the report confirm the above suspicions, this considerable work by NIST will fuel this sad argument.

Love,
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